

Objection 1. It would seem possible that some resistance can be made to the order of the Divine government. For it is written (Is. 3:8): “Their tongue and their devices are against the Lord.”

Objection 2. Further, a king does not justly punish those who do not rebel against his commands. Therefore if no one rebelled against God’s commands, no one would be justly punished by God.

Objection 3. Further, everything is subject to the order of the Divine government. But some things oppose others. Therefore some things rebel against the order of the Divine government.

On the contrary, Boethius says (De Consol. iii): “There is nothing that can desire or is able to resist this sovereign good. It is this sovereign good therefore that ruleth all mightily and ordereth all sweetly,” as is said (Wis. 8) of Divine wisdom.

I answer that, We may consider the order of Divine providence in two ways: in general, inasmuch as it proceeds from the governing cause of all; and in particular, inasmuch as it proceeds from some particular cause which executes the order of the Divine government.

Considered in the first way, nothing can resist the order of the Divine government. This can be proved in two ways: firstly from the fact that the order of the

Divine government is wholly directed to good, and everything by its own operation and effort tends to good only, “for no one acts intending evil,” as Dionysius says (Div. Nom. iv): secondly from the fact that, as we have said above (a. 1, ad 3; a. 5, ad 2), every inclination of anything, whether natural or voluntary, is nothing but a kind of impression from the first mover; as the inclination of the arrow towards a fixed point is nothing but an impulse received from the archer. Wherefore every agent, whether natural or free, attains to its divinely appointed end, as though of its own accord. For this reason God is said “to order all things sweetly.”

Reply to Objection 1. Some are said to think or speak, or act against God: not that they entirely resist the order of the Divine government; for even the sinner intends the attainment of a certain good: but because they resist some particular good, which belongs to their nature or state. Therefore they are justly punished by God.

Reply obj. 2 is clear from the above.

Reply to Objection 3. From the fact that one thing opposes another, it follows that some one thing can resist the order of a particular cause; but not that order which depends on the universal cause of all things.